

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 04473 041303Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 /026 W
-----094203 041305Z /47

Z O 041232Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV FLASH
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM FLASH
SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 9071
USMISSION USUN FLASH
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T BEIRUT 4473

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, MILI, LE, IS
SUBJECT: SOUTH LEBANON: CHICKENS AND EGGS

1. BOUTROS, KINSOLVING AND I HAD HEART-TO-HEART TALK THIS MORNING ABOUT SHOWDOWN AT KAWKABA. I POINTED OUT TO BOUTROS THAT ALTHOUGH WE WERE CONTINUING OUR EFFORTS WITH ISRAELIS TO GET THEM TO ACCEPT PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENT WHICH WOULD PERMIT LEBANESE TROOPS PROCEED TO TIBNIN WITHOUT HINDRANCE, I DID NOT REALLY HAVE LEBANESE ACCEPTANCE OF THIS SCHEME, WHICH WOULD INVOLVE PUTTING MAJOR HADDAD INTO ICEBOX. WE WOULD BE IN MUCH STRONGER NEGOTIATING POSITION WITH ISRAELIS IF WE HAD CLEAR ACCEPTANCE OF SUCH ARRANGEMENTS.

2. BOUTROS ARGUED, ON THE OTHER HAND, WHAT WHILE HE UNDERSTOOD DESIRABILITY OF PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS, PM WAS UNCONVINCED AND PRESIDENT SARKIS WAS DOUBTFUL. IT

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WOULD BE MUCH EASIER TO CONVINCE THEM IF THERE WAS A FIRM AGREEMENT FROM THE ISRAELIS, BUT LATTER KEPT CHANGING THEIR POSITION EVERY 24 HOURS AND LEBANESE HAD NO FIRM GROUND TO STAND ON. THEY NEEDED A FIRM PROPOSITION TO DEBATE. SO FAR I COULD NOT EVEN GUARANTEE THEM THE ELEMENTS OF THE SOLUTION WE HAD SUGGESTED.

3. WE DISCUSSED HOW WE MIGHT GET AROUND THIS CHICKEN AND EGG DILEMMA AND BOUTROS SAID THAT WE COULD GIVE HIM A FIRM PROPOSITION HE WOULD TRY TO SELL IT TO HOSS AND SARKIS. HE UNDERSTOOD THE DIFFICULTY OF GETTING THE ISRAELIS TO SEE THE LEBANESE POINT OF VIEW ABOUT HADDAD, PARTICULARLY GIVEN ATTITUDES OF BENGAL AND EYTAN, BUT FATE OF LEBANON WAS AT STAKE AND ISRAELIS WOULD HAVE TO SEE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE HADDAD ISSUE TO LEBANESE. I SAID IT WAS BY NO MEANS SURE THAT WE COULD EVEN GET THE ISRAELIS TO PUT THE ISSUE IN THE ICEBOX. BOUTROS SAID HE REALIZED THIS, BUT GOL'S PRIORITY REQUEST TO THE GOI WAS THAT ISRAELIS FORGET MAJOR HADDAD AND ALLOW LEBANESE TO SETTLE PROBLEM IN THEIR OWN WAY WITH UNDERSTANDING MAJOR HADDAD WOULD NOT BE HARMED. I PROMISED TO TRANSMIT THIS MESSAGE AS STATED IN PREVIOUS SENTENCE.

4. I THEN WROTE DOWN ON PIECE OF PAPER WHICH WE LEFT WITH BOUTROS FOLLOWING SUGGESTED OUTLINE OF AGREEMENT:

(A) LEBANESE FORCE TO ADVANCE TO TIBNIN-QA'QA'YA SECTOR WITH ALL ITS EQUIPMENT BY FIVE CONTINGENTS OF 130 MEN EACH. EACH CONTINGENT TO BE ESCORTED BY UNIFIL.

(B) ROUTE WILL BE KAWKABA-ADAYSIA VIA CENTRAL ROAD, I.E., MAIN ROAD WHICH PASSES BETWEEN MARJAYOUN AND AL-KHIAM.

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(C) QUESTION OF MAJOR HADDAD'S STATUS WILL BE SET ASIDE FOR THE TIME BEING.

5. I SAID I WOULD TRANSMIT ABOVE TO TEL AVIV WITH THE REQUEST THAT AMBASSADOR LEWIS PUT IT TO ISRAELIS AFTER FIRST PUTTING FORTH PRIORITY LEBANESE REQUEST DESCRIBED ABOVE. IN THIS REGARD, WHAT INDUCEMENT COULD BOUTROS GIVE US TO CONVINCE THE ISRAELIS THEY SHOULD DO AS SUGGESTED? WAS THE OFFER MADE BY JOHNNY ABDO STILL OPEN? AFTER SOME REFLECTION BOUTROS SAID HE WOULD REINSTATE THAT OFFER AND WOULD THREATEN TO RESIGN IF REST OF GOVERNMENT REFUSED TO GO ALONG.

6. WE THEN DISCUSSED EFFORTS WHICH FRENCH AND BRITISH AMBASSADORS AND UN REP. SAUNDERS AND MYSELF MIGHT MAKE TO CONVINCE HOSS AND SARKIS TO GO ALONG WITH THE PRAGMATIC SOLUTION. WE DECIDED TO AWAIT ISRAELI RESPONSE.

7. WE DID NOT DISCUSS POSSIBILITY OF UN SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING. BOUTROS SAID THAT PRESIDENT SARKIS WAS INCLINED AT THIS POINT TO SIT IT OUT AT KAWKABA IF IT TOOK ALL SUMMER. I SAID THAT I UNDERSTOOD JOHNNY ABDO FELT THERE MIGHT BE 80 PERCENT CHANCE THEY COULD FORCE

A PASSAGE AT MARJAYOUN WITHOUT SERIOUS RESISTANCE.
I WANTED HIM TO KNOW MY PERSONAL ESTIMATE WAS THAT THEIR
CHANCES OF DOING SO WERE ABSOLUTELY ZERO.

7. COMMENT: BOUTROS KNOWS AS WELL AS WE DO THAT GIVEN EVENTS
OF THIS WEEK, LIKELIHOOD OF ISRAELIS ACCEDING TO LEBANESE
PRIORITY REQUEST THAT THEY LEAVE HADDAD TO LEBANESE IS JUST ABOUT
NIL. HE FEELS, HOWEVER, THAT IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE MAKE
SINCERE EFFORT TO CONVINCE ISRAELIS THAT THIS WOULD BE IN
GENERAL INTEREST BECAUSE IT WOULD ENORMOUSLY FACILITATE TASK
HERE. IF ISRAELIS WOULD ACCEPT THAT, THERE WOULD BE NO PROBLEM
ABOUT THE REST OF THE SOLUTION (TO STATE THE OBVIOUS). HE NEEDS
TO BE IN A POSITION TO SAY, OR TO HAVE ME SAY, THAT WE HAVE MADE
A COLLEGE TRY IN THIS RESPECT, WHETHER OR NOT WE SUCCEED. HE
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IS EAGERLY AWAITING ANY RESPONSE WE MAY HAVE FROM TEL AVIV.

8. HAVE JUST SEEN TEL AVIV'S 9934. AM GOING UPSTAIRS TO HAVE
A DRINK.
PARKER

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BEIRUT04473
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780319-0134
Format: TEL
From: BEIRUT
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780895/aaaadbko.tel
Line Count: 141
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 46831d68-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1827720
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOUTH LEBANON: CHICKENS AND EGGS
TAGS: PBOR, MILI, LE, IS
To: TEL AVIV JERUSALEM
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/46831d68-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014